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Aufzüge bilden eine Art Verteidigung seiner Stellung und zwar den politischen Freunden wie der Regierung gegenüber. Jenen konnte er aus kühler Überlegung nicht folgen und vom regierenden Hause Habsburg aus patriotischem Gefühl nicht lassen; denn wenn er gleich Habsburger in tiefer Erniedrigung schildert, so hindert ihn das selbst hier nicht, auf ihr Haus (9, 67) ein hellklingendes Loblied zu singen.

Auch in den bisher nicht erwähnten Dramen liegt noch manches, das Grillparzers Ansichten über politische Tagesfragen und wirtschaftliche oder politische Probleme weiter erklären würde. Und noch weiter würde das Material dazu wachsen, wenn sich auch für die bisher unerklärt gebliebenen Epigramme die einzelnen Veranlassungen feststellen liessen. An dem Gesamtbild von Grillparzer als politisierendem Staatsbürger, wie Bücher es uns gezeichnet hat, würden wohl aber weitere Funde nichts ändern.

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BEOWULF, EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION, BIBLIOGRAPHY, NOTES, GLOSSARY, AND APPENDICES, by W. J. Sedgefield, Litt.D. Second Edition. Manchester at the University Press. 1913.

BEOWULF, WITH THE FINNSBURG FRAGMENT, edited by A. J. Wyatt. New Edition revised with Introduction and Notes by R. W. Chambers. Cambridge, at the University Press. 1914.

English scholarship now has to its credit two excellent editions of *Beowulf*, which will undoubtedly do much to make a reading of the poem easier and pleasanter for students in England and America. While mainly designed for those who are approaching this material for the first time, each of these books contains a great deal of interest and value to the expert. The two might profitably be used in conjunction, since they are not at all alike in critical apparatus, and since each presents some features of excellence not found in the other.

Dr. Sedgefield's first edition has already been reviewed by the present writer in this journal (Vol. X, pp. 633 ff., October, 1911). In that edition the text and glossary were good, the notes fair, the introduction exceedingly bad. In the present issue most of the earlier errors have been corrected. The introduction has been entirely rewritten, to its very great benefit. The marks of quantity have been added in the text and the glossary. Various conjectural emendations have been excised, and many of the notes revised. Some obvious mistakes, already pointed out, have been allowed to stand—as, for example, the note to 1240. The punctuation is occasionally questionable, as the semicolon instead of the period after 17. But punctuation is not a matter one can dogmatize

about. It seems a pity that the *Finnsburg Fragment*, which everyone reads in connection with *Beowulf*, should not have been provided with quantities, notes, and a place in the glossary. It is even more of a pity that Dr. Sedgefield thinks it necessary to adhere to the old theory of Möller in regard to the interpretation of this poem, and its relation to the epic. (See especially the Glossary of Proper Names, sub Finn, pp. 258-59.) Dr. Chambers' comments are far more up to date: "Möller's view is open to at least half a dozen objections. . . . This theory is, therefore, now generally discredited, and most recent scholars follow in the main the view of Bugge" (p. 168). The inclusion of *Widsith*, *Deor*, and *Waldhere* in Sedgefield's edition is much to be commended. If time permits, *Widsith* should always be read in conjunction with *Beowulf*. But the statement about these poems in the Introduction is not felicitously phrased. "There seems good reason for believing that the earliest OE. poetry was lyric in character and strophic like the Old Icelandic poetry in the sense that there was no *enjambement*, the full stop occurring at the end of a line. To this class belong the *Rune Song*, *Deor's Lament*, the *Charms*, and *Widsith*" (p. xviii). This might seem to mean that the poems named are all examples of the oldest Anglo-Saxon poetry, that they are all strophic, and have no *enjambement*. The *Rune Song* is not very early in its present shape—all that Brandl will say is "jedenfalls vor der Zeit Alfreds"; *Deor* (which ought not to be called a "Lament," although the title will no doubt long survive) is probably of the eighth century; and there are late elements in the *Charms* and *Widsith*. There are traces of strophic structure in *Widsith*, but it is misleading to speak of it as a "strophic" poem. Möller's view is, of course, long since obsolete. *Enjambement* is not always absent from these pieces. There are other passages in the Introduction and Notes that would gain by greater exactness of statement, or greater caution in setting forth a debatable question. Thus when it is said that William of Malmesbury and Æthelweard "substitute" Scaef for Scyld, the term seems unfortunate, in the present unsettled condition of the problem (p. 109). It may be true that "the Sigurðr (Siegfried) of the *Völsunga saga* (Wælsing) and the *Nibelungenlied* is replaced by Sigemund in the *Beowulf*" (p. xxxvi), but Dr. Sedgefield will find scholars to disagree with him, and students who will wonder what the word "Wælsing" means, as he has phrased the sentence. The whole Introduction, however, represents so great an advance over that in the first edition that one does not feel inclined to cavil at minor faults. Most of the errors have been corrected, and there is less reverence for obsolete theorizing. Many scholars nowadays seem disquieted because the Anglo-Saxons celebrated in *Beowulf* Geats and Danes, instead of their own people. Professor F. W. Moorman, for example, has recently advanced an elaborate and ingenious theory that the poem took shape in a Geat colony settled

in Yorkshire, which he thinks may explain this difficulty.¹ Dr. Sedgefield asks, "What is the reason for this exclusive interest in Scandinavian matters?" (p. xxix), and believes that the settlement of Danes among gradually departing Anglian tribes on the mainland provides a solution. It ought not to be necessary to point out that at this period there was great interest in the deeds and sagas of foreign peoples, and that these sagas often throve best and reached their highest literary development far away from the places where they first arose. Is it a matter of surprise that the Scandinavians developed the Nibelung story, the scenes of which were about the Rhine and at the court of the Hunnish king, or that Eormanric and Dietrich of Bern were favorite heroes among peoples of nationality very different from their own? Moreover, the interest of the Anglo-Saxons was not exclusively centred on Scandinavian epic material. *Widsith* shows well enough how little confined to any one people that interest really was, and the material of the *Waldhere* fragments, which is not Scandinavian at all, confirms it. It is a mere accident that the only long epic in Anglo-Saxon which has survived until the present day should deal with Scandinavian heroes.

Turning now to the edition by Dr. Chambers, we see at the first glance that it has been much changed from the form in which it left the hands of Mr. Wyatt. It is, indeed, virtually an independent work. The revision has been made with great skill and discretion. The critical apparatus has been much enlarged, especially in the somewhat copious Notes. As the editor points out, this has been rendered necessary by the publication of many new interpretations and emendations in recent years, many of which cannot be disregarded. The very ascetic Preface of the earlier edition, covering thirteen pages, has here been expanded to thirty-six. Most of this space is taken up in defending or explaining editorial principles and practice. Little is said of grammar, and nothing of syntax, metre, style, structure, literary history, or theories of composition. A very few bibliographical references are given. Much of this material is to be looked for in a separate *Introduction to Beowulf*, which is to be published shortly. Such a volume has long been needed, and it is gratifying to know that it will come from Dr. Chambers' own pen. The question remains, however, whether it may not be well to preface the text with a brief discussion of these matters, with references to the books most helpful to the student. It is frequently convenient to place the most essential facts in regard to the poem before students in the beginning, postponing detailed study until after the text has been read. To compress into brief form discussion of the principal points of *Beowulf*-criticism is indeed not easy, but it seems worth trying. Mr. Sedgefield's attempt leaves a good deal to be desired, but shows the general lines along which such

¹*Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association*, Vol. V, Oxford, 1914.

work might proceed. Brief explanations of this sort would not materially increase the size of the present volume. Moreover, the Introduction, as it stands, is a little diffuse in places. The excursus on p. xii, for example, might well have been omitted.

Dr. Chambers' very careful description of the MS is supplemented by two excellent half-tones, reproducing pages which illustrate the handwriting of each of the two scribes. A transcription is placed on the page opposite. This has often been done before, but it is not so easy to find facsimiles of the Thorkelin MSS. Both the copy made by Thorkelin and that made at his order are here illustrated in specimen pages. Great care has obviously been exercised in examining the *Beowulf* MS; this may be seen by reference to the pages in which the marks of quantity appearing in the MS are discussed (xxxvii-xxxviii). After the exceedingly painstaking collations of Sedgefield and Chambers, it seems not too much to say that little remains to be done by working directly from the MS itself.

The editorial methods seem to the present reviewer almost uniformly excellent. Conservatism is the rule,—and Mr. Wyatt's text was distinctly conservative, too. The best proof of Dr. Chambers' adherence to that principle is that he has made no conjectural emendations of his own at all. He rightly refuses to "emend the text where the metre shows the form given in the MS to be wrong," maintaining that absolutely consistent reconstruction would necessitate a complete rewriting in the language of the eighth century. It might be added that, despite the great services rendered to Anglo-Saxon metrics by Sievers, much still remains to be settled, and that the metrical system is not now, and perhaps never will be, a mathematically accurate affair. The editor shows a similar conservatism in regard to dialectal variations. The whole tendency of the present day is against unduly "normalized" texts, as it is against those in which conjectural reconstructions abound. In this edition it is obvious that smooth and ingenious readings have constantly been rejected in favor of the wording of the MS.

The present reviewer agrees that it is a pity that Anglo-Saxon texts cannot be printed in type approximating more closely to the characters in the MSS. This is particularly desirable in dealing with passages in which emendation is necessary. As Dr. Chambers says, "A conjecture which seems a very violent one when expressed in modern type may yet appear very reasonable when we picture the form of the Old English letters." The practice of printing with characters modelled upon the MS handwriting was followed by most of the earlier editors, and has been revived in modern times by Trautmann, but his example has been but little imitated,—partly, no doubt, because of the expense of the type. Into the text of the new edition Dr. Chambers has introduced the character ȝ, "against which," he thinks, "most teachers seem to cherish an

unreasoning antipathy." Elsewhere in the book, however, he uses *g*. Would it not be better to employ the Anglo-Saxon character uniformly throughout the whole book? Its introduction seems desirable; it is much used in Anglo-Saxon texts printed in Germany, and it surely forms a better symbol for the different sounds which it represents than the Roman *g*.

There is undoubtedly a distinct advantage in placing the Notes at the foot of the page, rather than at the back of the book, as done by Sedgfield and Schücking, or even in a separate volume, as Holthausen arranges them. Dr. Chambers is here carrying out the plan adopted by Mr. Wyatt in the earlier edition. It undoubtedly saves time and eyesight. In the arrangement of the critical material, the choice of type, and the spacing on the page, the present book is to be commended.

The Index of Persons and Places is admirable, as might be expected from the chief authority on *Widsith*, that cyclopedia of Germanic story. But it is regrettable that the editor, in his list of what may be supposed to be the three most helpful works covering this general subject, should include Miss M. G. Clarke's *Sidelights on Teutonic History during the Migration Period*, an untrustworthy and unauthoritative book, with many errors and misprints, and entirely lacking in critical judgment and perspective. The general view of the Finnsburg material proposed by Chambers is, as has already been noted, far more in accordance with the best modern criticism than Sedgfield's, although it seems doubtful if his theory of a part played by the Eotenas in contradistinction to the Frisians will command general assent. The reading of the "Thryth" passage (1931 ff.) seems to the present writer more convincing than Sedgfield's. It is precisely here that one of the chief excellences of this edition appears: it shows a firm grasp of the complicated problems of Germanic heroic story, and a wise and conservative application of the results of modern research to the readings in the text.

The plan of the present review precludes discussion of the details of the textual criticism in the Notes. The intention of the writer is rather to make clear the main lines along which each of these two editions has been conceived, and to point out their respective merits. It is easy to criticise, but it is not easy to exaggerate the amount of patient labor which has gone to the making of these two books. For both of them, the student of *Beowulf* should feel very grateful. According to his needs, he may use each of them with the greatest profit. Finally, a word of appreciation may perhaps be added on behalf of those who are engaged in teaching the poem or in endeavoring to throw fresh light upon its many difficulties.

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